



**OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
STATEWIDE TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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Date: September 21, 2018

Attachment 10

To: Ronny J. Coleman, Chairman
Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
c/o State Fire Training

From: State Fire Training, Kevin Dickson, Training Specialist III

Subject/Agenda Action Item: Digital Course Returns

Recommended Actions: Information/Discussion

Background Information:

Over the last eighteen months State Fire Training (SFT) has been actively implementing a new computerized records management system (RMS), purchased from Envisage Technologies and specifically named ACADIS. The new RMS system is a cloud based, off the shelf, browser based system that includes a student/instructor online portal. The new system allows for all correspondence, requests for instructor registration, certifications, class and instructor history to be archived electronically. To-date over 1.5 million records have been converted and prepared for online viewing. Even though data conversion and paper files will continue to be processed and converted for the foreseeable future SFT is ready to take the next step by having all instructor led courses returned electronically eliminating the need for traditional paper records or green Scantron (bubble) forms.

For SFT courses starting after December 31, 2018, SFT will no longer accept course returns submitted by instructors on paper and scantron forms. Class rosters will now utilize a spreadsheet, compatible with most popular spreadsheet applications, formatted with the minimum required information to document student participation and eliminates the need for Social Security Numbers (SSN). The spreadsheet along with all required information and instructions can be found on the SFT website under "Instructors, Resources". Students will now be verified by their assigned State Fire Training Identification Number (SFT ID) and email address.

The course approval process will continue as currently being practiced. Instructors will receive an email informing them of course approval for classes being scheduled after January 1, 2019 with appropriate links and instructions informing them of the new course return process.

Instructors are currently required to return course records within fifteen (15) days of course completion. This will continue to be the standard. SFT will then process the course within 14 days of all required material(s) being submitted through the student/instructor portal. Students will then receive an email notifying them that the course completion diploma is available. Students will then be able to print CFSTES and FSTEP course completion diplomas at home.

The student/instructor portal utilizes email as the primary source to create and maintain user accounts. To access their account each person must have an assigned SFT ID and email registered with their specific account. All registered portal users are now responsible to manage their email, mailing address and other personal information and will be informed that the recorded information is the primary contact information SFT utilizes for all correspondence.

The reliance of the SFT ID and Email are critical to the success of the RMS system and to accurately record student participation. These data elements will be required for each student and must be collected by the instructor. First time students are encouraged to receive their SFT ID and setup their online account prior to their first class by contacting SFT, but allowances in the spreadsheet will let the instructor report the required information and the accounts can be created at the time the class is processed. These cases should be limited and not the rule.

Tools have been created that will allow prior students to retrieve their SFT ID with links found on the SFT website homepage. Links to ACADIS RMS system can also be found on the SFT website with tools based on industry standards for account recovery. SFT staff is ready to assist our customer base by phone or email in those special cases where specific problems are encountered. Students and instructors are encouraged to utilize online tools as the much as possible.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

In January 2018, FFI Academies started submitting their documentation electronically to SFT. Electronic course return is just the next step at the customer level that will allow SFT to better serve the needs of the fire service. Allowing our customers to have full access to their training records, allowing course transcripts and training history to be printed and/or emailed on a real-time basis allows for more flexibility. Other enhancements and improvements will continue as the new RMS system matures and other options brought online.

Key Points and Dates:

- December 1, 2018 – Student/Instructor online portal will become active for all current/active instructors and registered users that have emails associated with their SFT ID.
- December 14, 2018 - SFT stops mailing course approval, course return checklist, FSTEP course diplomas, and scantron forms to primary instructors.
- December 14, 2018 – SFT emails primary instructor course approval and instructions for electronic course returns.
- January 1, 2019 – SFT no longer accepts course returns utilizing scantron forms.
 - CFSTES class diplomas will be made available through the student/instructor portal immediately after course processing with students receiving an email informing them of the availability.
 - FSTEP class diplomas will no longer be mailed to the instructors or require their signature but will be made available to students through the new student/instructor portal with students receiving an email informing them of the availability.

SFT will be providing user guides to assist in the transition to digital course returns.